

Overview of Public Comments Received



2.0 OVERVIEW OF PUBLIC COMMENTS RECEIVED

This section provides an overview of the public comments that were submitted following the public comment period, held May 1 to July 1, 2004.

2.1 Number of Comments Received

A total of five letters of comment were received by NMFS pertaining to the DEIS and Resource Management Plan (RMP): one from a government agency, three from public organizations, and one from an individual citizen. Several of the comments and suggestions were incorporated into the DEIS (FEIS Volume 2). This volume of the FEIS (Volume 1) contains copies of the letters of comment, followed by NMFS' responses to the comments.

2.2 Process for Responding to Comments

The comments received ranged from detailed scientific comments, to expressions of opinion on various issues, to comments that were essentially expressions of preference for different alternatives. Specific comments were identified and read by the appropriate resource specialists and NMFS, who prepared individual detailed responses. These comments and their associated responses are provided in Section 3 of FEIS Volume 1. Suggestions that were incorporated into the DEIS are indicated in the response to comments. The revisions are provided in FEIS Volume 2, Revised Draft EIS. Revisions were made by striking out old text and underlining updated or new text (unless otherwise noted).

The letters of comment are listed by page number in the FEIS Volume 1 Table of Contents. Each comment letter is followed by the response to comments in that letter. To see how comments were addressed, refer first to the letter of interest, and then to the numbers in the margins of the comment letter. The margin numbers direct the reader to the associated response with the same number.

2.3 Range of Comments

Although relatively few letters of comment were received, comments ranged from general suggestions for additional alternatives to detailed technical comments. Following is a general summary of the comments received:

1. Concern that the range of alternatives evaluated in the DEIS was too narrow and suggestions for additional alternatives:
 - More liberal harvest regime
 - Tribal-only fisheries regime
 - Tribal-only pre-terminal and tribal/non-tribal terminal fisheries regime
 - Fixed escapement goals with incidental-only levels below goal regime

- 1 • Fisheries regime similar to that used for Oregon Coast coho
- 2 • Changes in hatchery production, including no hatchery augmentation
- 3 • Reduced harvest, including specifically in Canadian fisheries
- 4 • Use of selective gear.
- 5 2. Request for discussion of different methods and locations for tribal harvest.
- 6 3. Request to broaden the scope of the Purpose and Need for the Proposed Action.
- 7 4. Request for discussion of methods and techniques to limit mortalities in sport and mixed-stock
- 8 fisheries in order to reduce overall mortality on Puget Sound chinook salmon.
- 9 5. Disagreement with derivation of harvest management objectives and standards.
- 10 6. Detailed technical comments about the data or assumptions used to evaluate alternatives or to
- 11 derive harvest management objectives or standards.
- 12 7. Disagreement with the range of abundances and Canadian/Alaskan fisheries in the scenarios used
- 13 to evaluate the alternatives.
- 14 8. Concern regarding the treatment of management precision either in the alternatives evaluated or
- 15 in suggested additional alternatives.
- 16 9. Disagreement with the bases for which the tribal-only and no hatchery augmentation alternatives
- 17 suggested during public scoping were eliminated.
- 18 10. Support for the analysis in the DEIS and the choice of the Preferred Alternative.
- 19 11. Request for estimation of costs associated from any delay in delisting under the ESA from
- 20 implementation of the Preferred Alternative.
- 21 12. Request for estimation of benefits and costs associated with alternative uses of human and
- 22 financial resources resulting from adoption of harvest regimes that are less resource-intensive
- 23 than the Preferred Alternative.
- 24 13. Request for economic analysis associated with non-use of the fish resource or costs associated
- 25 with production of fish harvested (hatchery production), or fisheries management.
- 26 14. Request for exploration of objectives and processes that change the hatchery reliance practices.
- 27 15. Request for greater discussion of habitat effects in Puget Sound, integration of habitat and
- 28 hatchery actions, and the influence of habitat on the derivation of harvest management objectives
- 29 and standards.
- 30 16. Concern that the Proposed Action does not meet the stated purpose because it does not conserve
- 31 the productivity, abundance, and diversity of some populations of Puget Sound chinook salmon
- 32 in the ESU.
- 33 17. Suggest revision to the DEIS to reflect application to the 2005 to 2009 fishing seasons rather than
- 34 the 2004 to 2009 fishing seasons because of delay in completing the EIS.
- 35 18. Disagreement with the identification of Alternative 1 (the Proposed Action) as the No Action
- 36 Alternative.
- 37 19. Suggest that the alternatives do not need to meet all the elements of the Purpose and Need.
- 38 20. Concern over the choice of Alternative 1 rather than the Environmentally Preferable Alternative
- 39 as the Preferred Alternative.